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[*on the recommendation of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (E/2015/66)*]

2015/7. Work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolutions 1999/65 of 26 October 1999 and 2013/25 of 25 July 2013,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals during the biennium 2013–2014,[1]

A. Work of the Committee regarding the transport of dangerous goods

Recognizing the importance of the work of the Committee for the harmonization of codes and regulations relating to the transport of dangerous goods,

Bearing in mind the need to maintain safety standards at all times and to facilitate trade, as well as the importance of these issues to the various organizations responsible for modal regulations, while meeting the growing concern for the protection of life, property and the environment through the safe and secure transport of dangerous goods,

Noting the ever-increasing volume of dangerous goods being introduced into worldwide commerce and the rapid expansion of technology and innovation,

Recalling that, while the major international instruments governing the transport of dangerous goods by the various modes of transport and many national regulations are now better harmonized with the Model Regulations annexed to the recommendations of the Committee on the transport of dangerous goods, further work on harmonizing these instruments is necessary to enhance safety and to facilitate trade, and recalling also that uneven progress in the updating of national

[1] E/2015/66.

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inland transport legislation in some countries of the world continues to present serious challenges to international multimodal transport,

1. *Expresses its appreciation* for the work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals with respect to matters relating to the transport of dangerous goods, including their security in transport;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(*a*) To circulate the new and amended recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods[2] to the Governments of Member States, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and other international organizations concerned;

(*b*) To publish the nineteenth revised edition of the *Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods: Model Regulations* and the sixth revised edition of the *Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods: Manual of Tests and Criteria* in all the official languages of the United Nations, in the most cost-effective manner, no later than the end of 2015;

(*c*) To make those publications available in book and electronic format and on the website of the Economic Commission for Europe, which provides secretariat services to the Committee;

3. *Invites* all Governments, the regional commissions, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the other international organizations concerned to transmit to the secretariat of the Committee their views on the work of the Committee, together with any comments that they may wish to make on the recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods;

4. *Invites* all interested Governments, the regional commissions, the specialized agencies and the international organizations concerned to take into account the recommendations of the Committee when developing or updating appropriate codes and regulations;

5. *Requests* the Committee to study, in consultation with the International Maritime Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the regional commissions and the intergovernmental organizations concerned, the possibilities of improving the implementation of the Model Regulations on the transport of dangerous goods in all countries for the purposes of ensuring a high level of safety and eliminating technical barriers to international trade, including through the further harmonization of international agreements or conventions governing the international transport of dangerous goods;

6. *Invites* all Governments, as well as the regional commissions and organizations concerned, the International Maritime Organization and the International Civil Aviation Organization to provide feedback to the Committee regarding differences between the provisions of national, regional or international legal instruments and those of the Model Regulations, in order to enable the Committee to develop cooperative guidelines for enhancing consistency between these requirements and reducing unnecessary impediments; to identify existing substantive and international, regional and national differences, with the aim of reducing those differences in modal treatment to the greatest extent practical and

[2] ST/SG/AC.10/42/Add.1 and Corr.1 and Add.2.

ensuring that, where differences are necessary, they do not pose impediments to the safe and efficient transport of dangerous goods; and to undertake an editorial review of the Model Regulations and various modal instruments with the aim of improving clarity, user friendliness and ease of translation;

B. Mutual administrative support for monitoring compliance of UN-marked containment systems with the *Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods: Model Regulations*

Noting with satisfaction that, owing to the effective implementation of the *Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods: Model Regulations* through national, regional and international legally binding instruments, as described in paragraph 8 of the report of the Secretary-General,[1] dangerous goods that are moved internationally have to be contained in packagings, containers and tanks bearing a "UN" mark certifying that they correspond to a design type that has been successfully tested under the control of the competent authority of the State authorizing the allocation of the mark,

Noting with concern that irregularities in, or forgery of, certification of "UN" packagings have been observed in international transport, leading to the use of packagings that do not meet the required performance level and increasing the risk of dramatic accidents that would affect the public, workers, means of transport, properties and the environment,

Recalling the basic principle laid down by the Committee that "The competent authority should ensure compliance with these Regulations. Means to discharge this responsibility include the establishment and execution of a programme for monitoring the design, manufacture, testing, inspection and maintenance of packaging, the classification of dangerous goods and the preparation, documentation, handling and stowage of packages by consignors and carriers, to provide evidence that the provisions of the Model Regulations are being met in practice",

Recognizing that mutual administrative assistance between the competent authorities of countries concerned would facilitate investigations and improve compliance assurance, but is currently prevented owing to lack of information on the contact details of competent authorities at the worldwide level,

1. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(*a*) To seek information from all States Members of the United Nations, and other States if appropriate, on the contact details of:

(i) The competent authorities responsible for national regulations applicable to the transport of dangerous goods by modes of transport other than by air or by sea;

(ii) The competent authorities, and their country identification codes, allowing, in the name of the State, the allocation of the "UN" mark on packagings, pressure receptacles, bulk containers and portable tanks;

(*b*) To develop and maintain up to date the lists of contact details;

(*c*) To make this information available on the website of the Economic Commission for Europe, which provides secretariat services to the Committee;

2. *Invites* all Member States to provide the requested information;

C. Work of the Committee regarding the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

Bearing in mind that in paragraph 23 (*c*) of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation),[3] countries were encouraged to implement the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals as soon as possible with a view to having the system fully operational by 2008,

Bearing in mind also that the General Assembly, in its resolution 57/253 of 20 December 2002, endorsed the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and requested the Economic and Social Council to implement the provisions of the Plan relevant to its mandate and, in particular, to promote the implementation of Agenda 21[4] by strengthening system-wide coordination,

Noting with satisfaction:

(*a*) That the Economic Commission for Europe and all United Nations programmes and specialized agencies concerned with chemical safety in the field of transport or of the environment, in particular the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Maritime Organization and the International Civil Aviation Organization, have already taken appropriate steps to amend or update their legal instruments in order to give effect to the Globally Harmonized System or are considering amending them as soon as possible,

(*b*) That the International Labour Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Health Organization are also taking appropriate steps to adapt their existing chemical safety recommendations, codes and guidelines to the Globally Harmonized System, in particular in the areas of occupational health and safety, pesticide management and the prevention and treatment of poisoning,

(*c*) That national legislation or standards implementing the Globally Harmonized System, or allowing its application, in one or several sectors other than transport have already been issued in Australia (2012), Brazil (2009), China (2010), Ecuador (2009), Japan (2006), Mauritius (2004), Mexico (2011), New Zealand (2001), the Republic of Korea (2006), the Russian Federation (2010), Serbia (2010), Singapore (2008), South Africa (2009), Switzerland (2009), Thailand (2012), the United States of America (2012), Uruguay (2009), Viet Nam (2009) and Zambia (2013), as well as in the 28 countries members of the European Union and the 3 countries members of the European Economic Area (2008),

(*d*) That work on the development or revision of national legislation, standards or guidelines applicable to chemicals in the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System continues in other countries, while in some others activities related to the development of sectoral implementation plans or national implementation strategies are being conducted or are expected to be initiated soon,

(*e*) That a number of United Nations programmes and specialized agencies and regional organizations, in particular the United Nations Institute for Training

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[3] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

[4] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

and Research, the International Labour Organization, the World Health Organization, the Economic Commission for Europe, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the European Union, Governments and non-governmental organizations representing the chemical industry have organized or contributed to multiple workshops, seminars and other capacity-building activities at the international, regional, subregional and national levels, in order to raise administration, health sector and industry awareness and to prepare for or support the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System,

Aware that effective implementation will require further cooperation between the Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals and the international bodies concerned, continued efforts by the Governments of Member States, cooperation with the industry and other stakeholders and significant support for capacity-building activities in countries with economies in transition and developing countries,

Recalling the particular significance of the Global Partnership for Capacity-building to Implement the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the International Labour Organization and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development for building capacities at all levels,

1. *Commends* the Secretary-General on the publication of the fifth revised edition of the *Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals*[5] in the six official languages of the United Nations, in book form and on CD-ROM, and its availability, together with related informational material, on the website of the Economic Commission for Europe, which provides secretariat services to the Committee;

2. *Expresses its deep appreciation* to the Committee, the Commission and the United Nations programmes, specialized agencies and other organizations concerned for their fruitful cooperation and their commitment to the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(*a*) To circulate the amendments[6] to the fifth revised edition of the *Globally Harmonized System* to the Governments of Member States, the specialized agencies and other international organizations concerned;

(*b*) To publish the sixth revised edition of the *Globally Harmonized System* in all the official languages of the United Nations in the most cost-effective manner, no later than the end of 2015, and to make it available in book and electronic format and on the website of the Commission;

(*c*) To continue to make information on the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System available on the website of the Commission;

4. *Invites* Governments that have not yet done so to take the necessary steps, through appropriate national procedures and/or legislation, to implement the Globally Harmonized System as soon as possible;

[5] ST/SG/AC.10/30/Rev.5.

[6] ST/SG/AC.10/42/Add.3.

5. *Reiterates its invitation* to the regional commissions, United Nations programmes, specialized agencies and other organizations concerned to promote the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System and, where relevant, to amend their respective international legal instruments addressing transport safety, workplace safety, consumer protection or the protection of the environment, so as to give effect to the Globally Harmonized System through such instruments;

6. *Invites* Governments, the regional commissions, United Nations programmes, specialized agencies and other organizations concerned to provide feedback to the Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals on the steps taken for the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System in all relevant sectors, through international, regional or national legal instruments, recommendations, codes and guidelines, including, when applicable, information about the transitional periods for its implementation;

7. *Encourages* Governments, the regional commissions, United Nations programmes, specialized agencies and other relevant international organizations and non-governmental organizations, in particular those representing industry, to strengthen their support for the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System by providing financial contributions and/or technical assistance for capacity-building activities in developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

D. Programme of work of the Committee

Taking note of the programme of work of the Committee for the biennium 2015–2016 as contained in paragraphs 50 and 51 of the report of the Secretary-General,[1]

Noting the relatively poor level of participation of experts from developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the work of the Committee and the need to promote their wider participation in its work,

1. *Approves* the programme of work of the Committee;[1]

2. *Stresses* the importance of the participation of experts from developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the work of the Committee, calls in that regard for voluntary contributions to facilitate their participation, including through support for travel and daily subsistence, and invites Member States and international organizations in a position to do so to contribute;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Economic and Social Council in 2017 a report on the implementation of the present resolution, the recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods and the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals.

32nd plenary meeting
8 June 2015